

## **Kansas Demonstration to Maintain Independence and Employment**

In November of 2004, Kansas Medicaid received a Demonstration to Maintain Independence (DMIE) grant award of \$13,044,101 from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

The number of people receiving Social Security benefits because they have been determined disabled has steadily increased in the United States, more than doubling from four million in 1985 to 9.1 million in 2000. Less than ½ of 1% of these recipients return to work and stop receiving Social Security cash assistance. It is hoped that this project will demonstrate that, with preventive intervention, more people at risk of becoming permanently disabled will remain productive and self-sufficient, contribute to the Kansas economy, and avoid dependency and impoverishment.

Focusing on individuals enrolled in the Kansas High Risk Pool, who have severe, often multiple, impairments and have been labeled “uninsurable”, the Kansas demonstration will test the hypothesis that providing intensive health care and support services will forestall the loss of employment, prevent entering the Social Security system as “too disabled to work”, and eliminate the need for cash benefits.

An evaluation oriented demonstration, Kansas Medicaid and the University of Kansas evaluators will test the hypothesis that providing intensive health care and support services will help people with potentially disabling conditions to remain employed.

Participants will be 200 - 250 employed individuals eligible for health care through the Kansas Health Insurance Association High Risk Pool. This “intervention group” will continue to pay their high-risk pool insurance premium and receive that health coverage. They will also receive “Medicaid equivalent” health care covered by a combination of grant and state funds, and receive additional intensive health coverage and supports designed to maintain health and employment, and paid for by grant funds.

There will also be a “control group” comprised of 200 – 250 employed individuals enrolled in the Kansas High Risk Pool. This group will not receive the “Medicaid equivalent” or the additional intensive health coverage and support services offered to the intervention group.

The University of Kansas will independently study the two randomly selected groups over a five-year period, evaluating whether the services offered the intervention group made them less likely to enter the Social Security system as “permanently disabled”.

Other partners include the Kansas Insurance Commissioner’s Office, the Kansas Health Insurance Association (KHIA) who funds the and has oversight responsibilities for the Kansas High Risk Pool, and Benefit Management Incorporated (BMI) who is the third-party manager of the High Risk Pool. A utilization review organization will also be selected. The Kansas DMIE will continue through September 30, 2009.